

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SMS-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 OMB-01
TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /103 W
-----109570 251729Z /42

P 251649Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6056
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 20458

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UR, JA, PEPR, PROP
SUBJECT: SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS

REF: (A) MOSCOW 19571, (B) MANILA 14490 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: TWO PRESS COMMENTARIES CALL ON JAPAN TO
MATCH WORDS WITH DEEDS AND TAKE INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE
SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS. ONE ARTICLE CALLS FOR
DISCUSSION OF SOVIET-PROPOSED GOOD NEIGHBOR TREATY
"TO RESTORE HEALTHY CLIMATE IN SOVIET-JAPANESE RELA-
TIONS". NEITHER ARTICLE REFERS TO NORTHERN TERRITORIES
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ISSUE. BOTH ARTICLES ECHO RECENT PRIVATE CHARGES BY
SOVIETS OF US COMPLICITY IN PFT SIGNING. GIVEN IMMOBIL-
ITY IN SOVIET POLICY TOWARD JAPAN, AND BARRING CON-
CESSIONS BY TOKYO, IT APPEARS THAT STALEMATE IN SOVIET-
JAPANESE RELATIONS IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE, ALTHOUGH
THE JAPANESE HERE DO NOT EXPECT THE PFT TO BE AN ISSUE
VERY LONG. END SUMMARY.

1. SIGNED COMMENTARIES IN AUGUST 24 IZVESTIYA ("ON THE JAPANESE-CHINESE TREATY") AND AUGUST 25 PRAVDA ("RISKY STEP") PROVIDE MOST CONSIDERED ANALYSIS TO DATE OF THE SOVIET POSITION ON THE PFT SIGNING (ASSUME DEPT HAS FULL FBIS TEXTS). THE PATTERN OF BOTH ARTICLES IS IDENTICAL:

(A) AGONIZING, DRAWN OUT DESCRIPTION OF ANTI-SOVIET "ESSENCE" OF THE PFT AND THE DAMAGE WHICH MAY BE INFLICTED ON SOVIET INTERESTS BY TOKYO'S "CAPITULATING" TO CHINESE DEMANDS. PRAVDA ARTICLE DEPICTS JAPAN AS FALLING INTO PRC'S FOREIGN POLICY "TRAP" AND CITES DAILY TELEGRAPH AS REPORTING POSSIBILITY THAT PFT IS PEKING'S FIRST STEP "TOWARD INCLUDING JAPAN AND ITS ALLY, THE US, IN A WIDE UNITED FRONT AGAINST THE USSR."

(B) ASSERTION THAT THE ONUS IS ON JAPAN TO CHANGE THE ANTI-SOVIET "DIRECTION" OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY AND TO PROVE TOKYO'S DECLARATIONS, MOST RECENTLY REPEATED BY PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA AND FOREIGN MINISTER SONODA, THAT JAPAN WILL NOW GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO ITS RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

(C) TOKYO MUST MATCH ITS WORDS WITH "PRACTICAL DEEDS." THE FREQUENT REFERENCE TO THE VALUE OF GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS IN BOTH ARTICLES LEAVES LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE

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SOVIETS HAVE MOSCOW'S PROPOSED GOOD-NEIGHBOR TREATY IN MIND. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE PFT SIGNING, SOVIETS OPENLY SUGGEST IN IZVESTIYA COMMENTARY THAT "A BUSINESS-LIKE DISCUSSION TO THE MUTUAL SATISFACTION OF THE SIDES ON THE PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE DRAFT TREATY ON GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE USSR AND JAPAN WOULD FACILITATE THE RESTORATION OF A HEALTHY CLIMATE IN SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS."

2. NEITHER ARTICLE ADDRESSES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES ISSUE, WHICH TOKYO INSISTS MUST BE RESOLVED PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE SOVIET PROPOSED GOOD NEIGHBOR TREATY OR A PEACE TREATY. IZVESTIYA WORDING, CALLING FOR CONSIDERATION OF GOOD NEIGHBOR TREATY'S "PROPOSALS" INDICATES SOVIETS MAY TRY TO SKIRT NORTHERN TERRITORIES ISSUE BY CONCENTRATING NEGOTIATIONS ON INDIVIDUAL PROPOSALS IN TREATY RATHER THAN TREATY ITSELF.

3. BOTH ARTICLES' REFERENCES TO US ENCOURAGEMENT OF SINO-JAPANESE TIES ARE ALSO NOTEWORTHY. IZVESTIYA CHARGES THAT "BEHIND THE BACK OF PEKING AND TOKYO THE

CONTOURS OF INFLUENTIAL CIRCLES IN THE US ATTEMPTING TO
PLAY THE 'CHINA CARD' AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION ARE LOOM-
ING EVER MORE CLEARLY." PRAVDA, AFTER NOTING THAT
JAPAN LONG HELD OUT AGAINST THE PFT, CHARGES THAT "THE
SITUATION CHANGED BASICALLY AFTER THE VISIT OF BRZEZINSKI
TO PEKING, AND THEN TO TOKYO."

4. COMMENT: THE COMMENTARIES PROVIDE FURTHER EVIDENCE
(REF B) OF SOVIET SUSPICIAN (WHICH HAS BEEN PRIVATELY
VOICED TO US HERE) THAT WASHINGTON ENCOURAGE JAPAN TO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 20458

SIGN THE PFT. TO DATE, SOVIET MEDIA AND OUR CONVERSA-
TIONS WITH JAPANESE DIPLOMATS AND SOVIET CONTACTS HAVE
OFFERED NO INDICATIONS THAT MOSCOW IS SERIOUSLY CON-
SIDERING INITIATIVES TO GET JAPANESE-SOVIET RELATIONS
OUT OF THE RUT THEY HAVE BEEN IN DURING RECENT YEARS --
EVEN THOUGH SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS ARE ON THE MOVE AND
THE PROBABILITY OF CLOSER SINO-JAPANESE-US COOPERATION
IN THE EAST IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY REAL. AT LEAST

FOR THE SHORT TERM IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE IMBALANCE
IN JAPANESE-SOVIET AND JAPANESE-CHINESE RELATIONS WILL
CONTINUE TO GROW. HOWEVER THE JAPANESE DCM HERE EXPECTS
SOVIET INDIGNATION OVER THE PFT WILL SUBSIDE AFTER A
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DECENT INTERVAL. TOON

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